

**TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION**  
**FVA ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL TRAINING MEETING**

**Dec 10, 2021**

**Stephen F. Austin Building, Room 170, 1700 North Congress Ave, Austin, Texas 78701**

**I. Meeting called to order**

The FVA Advisory Committee Annual Training Meeting was called to order by Chairman Kerry Reyna at 8:01am. The following were present:

**Advisory Committee Members**

Kerry Reyna

Charles W. Wright

Dan Ball

Robert O'Reilly

Bobby Ehrig

Brian Allen

Luis Martinez

Jamilah James

Carrie Sconza (via teleconference)

**TVC Staff**

James Bracken, FVA Director

Michael Bardis, FVA

Julie Dillard, FVA

Ginger Berdoll, VMHD

John Goodell, General Counsel

Blake Harris, VMHD

Chair Reyna welcomed all in attendance, then called Committee Member Luis Martinez to lead the Pledge of Allegiance, and Committee Member Bobby Ehrig to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag. Chairman Reyna confirmed a quorum was present with all nine Advisory Committees in attendance: eight in person and one via teleconference.

## **II. Introduction of New Committee Member**

Introduction by Chairman Kerry Reyna of new member, Jamilah James. Ms. Reyna stated that Ms. James' term begins Jan 1, 2022 and is for one year, due to her fulfilling the remainder of Gene Wallace's 4-year term. Ms. Reyna invited the other Committee members to introduce themselves. Ms. Reyna also stated that three members terms will expire in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

## **III. Public Comment**

Chairman Reyna opened the floor to members of the public. There were no public comments.

## **IV. Review of Admin Rules Regarding Committee Chair and Vice Chair Elections**

Chairman Kerry Reyna asked FVA Director Jim Bracken to present the rules pertaining to elections. FVA Director Jim Bracken discussed TC 452.2, including administrative rule changes. These included term lengths of 1-2 years, and that the position of Chair and Vice Chair are limited to 2 years of service.

## **V. Election of Committee Chair**

Chairman Reyna ensured that the Committee had the opportunity to discuss and decide on term length of the Chair and Vice Chair, as previously described by FVA Director Bracken. Committee discussed the option to elect the Chair and Vice Chair positions for 1- or 2-year terms.

Motion: Recommend the Committee set the Chair and Vice Chair term lengths at 2 years

Motion made by: Bobby Ehrig

Motion seconded by: Robert O'Reilly

Action: Motion passes: 9 Y; 0 N

Chairman Reyna addressed the terms lengths being set at 2 year and introduced the election of the Committee Chair.

Motion: Nominate and elect a Chair for FVA Advisory Committee for the 2022 calendar year

Motion made by: Robert O'Reilly nominated Kerry Reyna for Chair

Motion seconded by: Bobby Ehrig

Action: Motion passes: 9 Y, 0 N

#### **VI. Election of Committee Vice Chair**

Chairman Reyna introduced the election of Vice Chair position.

Motion: Nominate and elect a Vice Chair for the FVA Advisory Committee for the 2022 calendar year

Motion made by: Kerry Reyna nominated Charles Wright for Vice Chair

Motion seconded by: Dan Ball

Action: Motion passes: 9 Y, 0 N

#### **VII. Approval of the April 27, 2021 FVA Advisory Committee Minutes**

Chairman Kerry Reyna discussed the approval of the previous meeting minutes, which were sent to the Committee via email by FVA Director Bracken for review.

Motion: Approve the minutes of the April 27, 2021 FVAAC meeting as presented

Motion made by: Charles Wright

Motion seconded by: Robert O'Reilly

Action: Motion passes: 9 Y, 0 N

#### **VIII. Needs Assessment Results**

Chairman Reyna introduced the 2020 Needs Assessment. Chairman Reyna asked FVA Director James Bracken to provide the Committee with an overview of the most recent Needs Assessment results, which inform the Commission of the Committees recommendations.

Director Bracken discussed the Needs Assessment, including an overview about the process for Committee member Ms. James. Director Bracken discussed the top two concerns being

Mental Health an Employment; Transportation Services and FVA needing to help with services asking for more help.

Dan Ball asked what FVA is currently using and stated that transportation services are beneficial for veterans. Chairman Reyna commented on the types of service vehicles and “moving toward things that make a difference.” FVA Operations Manager Michael Bardis stated that FVA needs to ask about barriers and what type of services are needed. Ms. James asked if there were demographics for this, if caregivers are a part of this, and elaborated on equine therapy, non-evidence-based treatments that veterans state the need. Director Bracken clarified that FVA only provides evidence-based grants.

#### **IX. 2022-2023 Request for Applications (RFA) Overview**

Chairman Reyna introduced the 2022-2023 RFAs and asked Director Bracken to provide the Committee with an overview of the current RFA pertaining to the next grant cycle.

Director Bracken discussed the 2022-2023 RFA. Topics discussed included the new grant category added. Director Bracken requested that Committee Members read the RFA and information on eligibility prior to approving grants and reviewed how grant officers review applications for eligibility/non-eligibility and flag for risks. Discussed how policy restrictions were put in place, and that there are two small business grant applications.

#### **X. Commission’s Guidance to FVA Committee for Recommending Grant Applications**

Director referred to page 9 of the RFA and acknowledged the difficulty in reviewing applications due to the Commission also being involved (a double-edged sword). He stated that Covid has made it more difficult for veterans to validate needs online (as opposed to in-person) and that Mental Health may not be the best venue for help.

Chairman Reyna asked for clarification on number 6; Mr. Ball and Mr. Wright discussed grant processes; Director Bracken clarified.

**XI. Policies and Statutes Commission's Guidance to FVA Committee for Recommending Grant Applications**

General counsel John Goodell spoke on the Public Information Act; discussed the process and role of the Advisory Committee. Advised members to contact Siobhan Kennon with requests. Discussed the Open Meeting Act and Commission personnel matters, such as having 45 days to be addressed on the next agenda for a matter to go up the chain of command.

Discussed public comments and what to be wary on discussing; gave example of ethics, stated that if FVA is asked to speak, they cannot be, but lunch can be paid for. Asked that such requests be sent to Mr. Goodall for approval, as intrinsic value must be determined.

Mr. Wright commented regarding check presentations; no daisy chains (4 people are talking and 1 tells someone else). Ms. Reyna stated that members must have general counsel on speed dial "to protect yourself if unsure."

Director Bracken discussed how FVA helping to enlist grantees could make observers think that some grantees have advantages over others, and to be careful. Also, that NDAs will be handed out in January 2022 and to direct questions to Mr. Goodell.

BREAK CALLED at 10:00 am by Chairman Reyna

MEETING RECONVENED at 10:15 am

Note: TVC Executive Director arrived at meeting at 10:15m and thanked the Committee for their attendance; gave review of FVA Committee meeting history.

**XII. Presentation on evidence-based therapies and treatments relevant for grant applications with mental health components**

VMHD Director Blake Harris presented on evidence-based therapies, gave intro on how it is critical for grant approval to enhance evidence-based practices for public health; compared clinical/non-clinical. Discussed best research, validity/reliability, clinical expertise, clinician vs non-clinicians.

Director Harris also discussed how an effective evidence-based program needs to understand strengths/resources, what's unique to client, socio cultural context, specific problems, personalities. Discussed effectiveness of an evidence-based program.

Director Bracken commented on training for non-profits. Ms. Reyna comments requested a cheat sheet on licensure; Director Bracken stated that one has been mailed to Committee Members. Mr. O'Reilly asked how long have the Committee has been around?

**XIII. Explanation and discussion of 2022-2023 grant application materials to be provided to FVA Committee members**

Committee discussed risks/flags sheet, dual track of renewals/application materials, maps, app in covenants, review scores/notes from FVA reviews.

Ms. James asked: "Does this go through one team and then another or is it reviewed at same time by one person?" Mr. Ehrig commented: "By the time we get it, FVA has already passed inspection for eligible applicants....Is there something that says person can be treated in different counties and be reimbursed for this?" FVA Lead Compliance Officer Julie answered.

Committee discussed why applications are qualified and given to the Committee if they may be unsatisfactory. Director Bracken discussed fold-out risk/flag sheet; explained that FVA will correspond flag number to item.

**XIV. Discussion and review of current grant cycle key dates/meetings/events**

Chairman Reyna introduced the discussion of grant cycle key dates and preparing the recommendation list for the Commission for May 2022. Director Bracken presented grant cycle information to the Committee. Ms. Reyna commented that presenting grantees meet VCSOs, VTC, Housing for Texas Heroes meets on Wednesday, Jan 26, and that other presenting grantees meet on Jan 27-28.

**XV. Discussion to set date, time, and location of next FVA Committee Meeting**

Chairman Reyna introduced setting the next FVA Committee meeting, and stated that based on Director Bracken's previous presentation, the date for the next meeting was set for Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 12:00pm.

**XVI. Adjournment**

Chairman Reyna concluded the agenda for the meeting and asked if the Committee members would like to comment. Director Bracken commented on admin/housekeeping items. Chairman Reyna requested that reimbursement amounts be made known to the Committee prior to travel. Mr. Wright stated that he would email his hotel receipt to FVA SSO.

Motion: Adjournment of FVA Advisory Committee meeting

Motion made by: Bobby Ehrig

Motion seconded by: Robert O'Reilly

Action: Motion passes: 9 Y, 0 N

Meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm

Minutes Approved:   
Kerry Reyna (Feb 2, 2022 14:21 CST)

Kerry Reyna, Chairman

# Dec 10 2021 FVAAC Training Meeting Minutes

Final Audit Report

2022-02-02

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